
5a. De-escalation to Stage 2 of NHS Scotland Support and Intervention Framework

Purpose: This report is for Assurance

Executive Sponsor: Ross McGuffie, Chief Executive

Author: Jack Frawley, Board Secretary

Executive Summary

A letter was issued from the Director-General for Health & Social Care and Chief Executive of NHS Scotland which confirmed the move of NHS Forth Valley to Stage 2 of the NHS Scotland Support and Intervention Framework for Governance, Leadership and Culture, effective 9 October 2025.

De-escalation to Stage 2 means that direct formal support would no longer be required. However, it remained essential that the improvements achieved were sustained, and that the Board continued to prioritise delivery of the agreed actions.

The culture work has also transitioned to business as usual and the Scottish Government will, through the Chief People Officer, continue to work with NHS Forth Valley in this area. The implementation of cultural change is ongoing, and it will take time to fully evidence the impact of these efforts.

NHS Forth Valley will continue to focus on making progress in the areas of Culture, Leadership and Governance with the intention being to submit further evidence to NPPOG in spring 2026.

Action Required

The Forth Valley NHS Board is asked to:

- (1) note the decision of NPPOG to move NHS Forth Valley to Stage 2 of the NHS Scotland Support and Intervention Framework for Governance, Leadership and Culture, effective 9 October 2025, and
- (2) consider if the report provides assurance that appropriate controls are in place to manage the identified risks, support the delivery of objectives and where improvements are needed, clear actions have been identified.

Governance Route to the Meeting and Previous Board Consideration

This matter has not previously been considered by governance groups.

Risk Assessment and Mitigation

There are no risk implications for NHS Forth Valley arising from this report.

Impact Assessments

Equality & Diversity and Fairer Scotland Duty

Does this report require an EQIA or Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment? No

If yes, please confirm this is attached. Attached ☐ Not required ☒

Financial, Digital and Infrastructure Implications

There are no financial, digital or infrastructure implications associated with this report.

Workforce Implications

There are no direct workforce implications in respect of this paper however the improvements resulting in reduction in escalation level under the headings of Culture, Leadership and Governance will support our workforce.

Quality / Patient Care Implications

The actions set out in the Assurance and Improvement Plan supported improvements in service quality and patient experience and formed part of the reduction in escalation level. The links between good leadership, governance and culture are well evidenced most recently, in the Blueprint for Good Governance 'For NHS Scotland to be successful in delivering quality healthcare, good governance is necessary but not sufficient if NHS Boards are to meet or exceed the expectations of their principal stakeholders. To do that, the organisation must also excel at day-to-day management of operations and the implementation of change.'

Population Health & Care Strategy

There are no population health & care strategy implications associated with this report, as the work of the sub-structures develop this will be considered.

Climate Change / Sustainability Implications

There are no climate change or sustainability implications associated with this report.

Engagement and Communications

Was statutory engagement with stakeholders required? Yes ☐ No ☒

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Letter from the Director-General for Health & Social Care and Chief Executive of NHS Scotland dated 8 October 2025.



E: dghsc@gov.scot

Chair NHS Forth Valley
Chief Executive

By email:
Neena.Mahal@nhs.scot
Ross.McGuffie@nhs.scot

08 October 2025

Dear Neena and Ross,

De-escalation to Stage 2 of NHS Scotland Support and Intervention Framework

I am writing to formally confirm that NHS Forth Valley will move to Stage 2 of the NHS Scotland Support and Intervention Framework for Governance, Leadership and Culture, effective 9 October 2025.

This decision follows a recommendation from the National Planning and Performance Oversight Group (NPPOG), which noted that your performance is being monitored through established mechanisms, consistent with other territorial Boards. During the most recent review meeting, officials were assured that substantial progress continues across all areas, with work-streams now routinely monitored through your Committee structures.

De-escalation to Stage 2 means that direct formal support will no longer be required. However, it remains essential that the improvements achieved are sustained, and that the Board continues to prioritise delivery of the agreed actions, now embedded as part of routine operations.

While the culture work has also transitioned to business as usual the Scottish Government will, through the Chief People Officer, continue to work with you in this area. The implementation of cultural change is ongoing, and it will take time to fully evidence the impact of these efforts.

Finally, I would like to personally thank you and your colleagues across NHS Forth Valley for your leadership and commitment in driving the sustained improvements that have led to this positive step forward.

Yours sincerely,

Caroline Lamb



Cammy Murray

Chief Executive of NHS Scotland and Director General for Health & Social Care.

